



STALKE OUT OF SPACE

RAPE KILL STEAL BURN

Kristian Von Hornsleth

+

Mensch über Mensch

Per Traasdahl

Stalke Galleri
Vesterbrogade 14A
20.04.01 to 26.05.01

Per Traasdahl

Mensch über Mensch

In his second solo exhibition at Stalke Galleri, Per Traasdahl presented three paintings from the series *Unter uns* (Among Us) alongside a group of new pencil drawings. At the time, Traasdahl, aged 39 and residing in Berlin and Wetzikon, Switzerland, had since 1998 focused his figurative practice on these two distinct formats.

The approximately seven-square-meter paintings appeared as “larger-than-life” groups of people set against wall-white backgrounds, resembling plastic room installations. In contrast, the smaller pencil drawings unfolded a finely nuanced and understated approach, presented under titles such as *First Chamber Play* and *Second Chamber Play*.

The exhibition also included new photographic editions reproduced from the large paintings.

The exhibition title *Mensch über Mensch*—in everyday German meaning “human telling stories about humans”—also carried layered meanings. It referred to humans stacked upon one another, humans distributed across different power relations, and, when the space between the words was removed, echoed the infamous Nietzschean concept of the *Übermensch* (Overhuman).

Traasdahl’s works were characterized by deliberate ambiguities and contradictions, which he allowed to remain unresolved as the works entered the world.

Andreas Jürgensen, who since January of that year had been a leading curator at Württembergischer Kunstverein in Stuttgart, wrote about Traasdahl’s work in the catalogue for Kunsthallen Brandts Klædefabrik’s Biennale for New Danish Art (1999–2000):

“Large and powerful in format like lush Baroque paintings, yet simultaneously delicate and ethereal in content. There are no classic heroes here—no struggle with fate, no flesh, and no desire. These puppet-like figures look silently at us, clumped together in a phantom-like cohesion. They stand next to each other but are not truly with each other, connected without knowing why.”

Within Traasdahl’s unique human laboratory, one might ask whether the figures were vividly painted puppets or poorly painted real humans. The petrification inherent in the stillness of drawing and painting became a fundamental condition of his content. Neither naturalistic nor photographic interpretation offered reassurance.



Per Traasdahl

If viewers perceived concrete narratives or expressions of contemporary states, this responsibility lay entirely with them. There were no reassuring references and no clear themes—only the notion that “you get what you give.”

In the previous year, Traasdahl had been represented in exhibitions such as Face à Face in Lucerne, the European Painting Prize Exhibition in Ostend, Belgium, and at art fairs in Berlin and Basel.

In parallel with the exhibition, the catalogue Mensch über Mensch, published by Kunstnetzwerk Verlag, Munich, was released, featuring texts written for the occasion by the Swiss-Hungarian author Melinda Nadj Abonji. Mensch über Mensch, Kunstnetzwerk Verlag, Munich.

Kristian Von Hornsleth

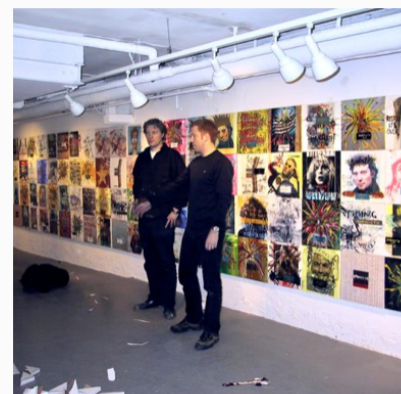
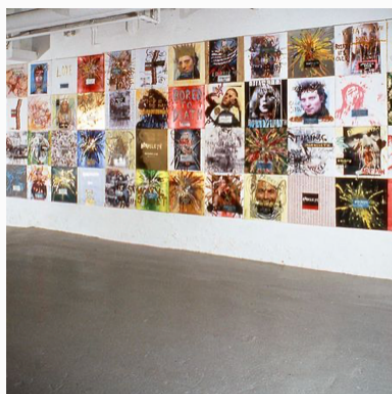
RAPE KILL STEAL BURN

Stalke Galleri exhibited new works by Kristian Hornsleth in the form of paintings, photographs, and sculptures. As the title suggested, the exhibition was based on statements articulated by Hornsleth himself:

“...in ordinary human enterprise, I was fascinated by myself and by the way the world touched me vividly while still giving me glimpses of indescribable happiness—it was a banal yet eternally valid life view, always challenging the art lover with his own aversion toward the decadent duality between longing and quality in the epistemological-theoretical tug-of-war... ‘know yourself’—or rather: Art lover, screw yourself...”

At the time, Hornsleth’s career appeared to be back on track. Following a personally challenging period involving divorce, bankruptcies, and drug abuse, he had re-established himself strongly. He had spent several years in Berlin and Italy, partly supported by grants from the Danish Arts Foundation.

Among other accomplishments, Hornsleth had established ongoing collaborations with four reputable galleries in Europe, with planned exhibitions extending well into the future. He was also engaged in several consultancy projects with major architecture firms and advertising agencies. Not least, the sales and prices of his works had increased significantly in the preceding years.



Kristian von Hornsleth at Stalke Galleri, 2001